

**James Madison to James Madison, Sr., March, 1777.
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,
1900-1910.**

TO JAMES MADISON. MAD. MSS.

Orange, March, Saturdy. 1777.1

1 The first paragraph of this letter relates to family affairs, his brother Anthony having ague and a swelling in the ann. "I ventured however to have a pretty large quantity of blood taken from him and had his arm kept moist by the usual Poultices, which has answered every purpose."

Hond. Sir, * * *

The following odd affair has furnished the Ct. of this county with some very unexpected business.

Two persons travelling from Phila. to the Southward one of them a Frenchman and an officer in the Continental army and the other a man of decent figure came to the Ct. House on the evening of the Ct. day and immediately inquired for a member of the Committee; and being withdrawn with several members into a private room they gave information, that they fell in with a man on the road a few miles from the Ct. house who, in the course of Conversation on public affairs gave abundant proof of his being an adherent to the King of G. B. and a dangerous Enemy to the State, that he ran into the most outrageous abuse of our proceedings and on their threatening to inform agt. him in the most daring manner bid defiance to Committees or whoever should pretend to judge or punish him.

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They said the man they alluded to had come with them to the Ct. House, and they made no doubt but they could point him out in the Crowd. On their so doing the culprit appeared to be Benjamin Haley. As the Committee had no jurisdiction in the case it was referred to a justice of the Peace. Every one seemed to be agreed that his conduct was a direct violation of Law and called aloud for public notice; but the witnesses being travellers and therefore unable to attend at

a Trial, it was thought best not to undertake a Prosecution which promised nothing but impunity and matter of triumph to the offender. Here the affair dropped and every one supposed was entirely at an end. But as the Frenchman was accidentally passing through the room where Haley was, he took occasion to admonish the people of his being a disaffected person and upbraided him for his Tory principles. This introduced a debate which was continued for some time with great heat on the part of the Frenchman and great insolence on the part of Haley. At the request of the latter they at length both appeared before a Justice of the peace. Haley at first evaded the charges of his antagonist, but after some time, said he scorned to be *counterfeit*, and in answer to some questions that were put to him, signified that we were in the state of rebellion and had revolted from our lawful Sovereign and that if the King had justice done him his authority would still be in exercise among us. This passed in the presence of 20 or 30 persons, and rendered the Testimony of the Travellers needless. A warrant for arresting him was immediately issued and executed. The criminal went through his examination in which his very Pleas seemed to aggravate his guilt. Witnesses were summoned sworn and their evidences taken. And on his obstinate refusal to give security for his appearance, He was committed to close gaol. This happened about 8 O'Clock. I have since heard he begged abt. one O'Clock in the morning to be admitted to bail & went home but not without threats of revenge and making public declaration that he was King George's man. I have stated the case thus particularly nor only for your own satisfaction, but that you may, if an opportunity occurs, take the advice of some Gentleman skilled in the Law, on the most proper and legal mode of proceeding against him.

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Ambrose requests you will enquire whether any pretty neat Shoe Boots may be had in Fredg. and the price of them.